

Better Child Care



TALC

Edited by
Sr M A Tregoning and Dr G S Bova



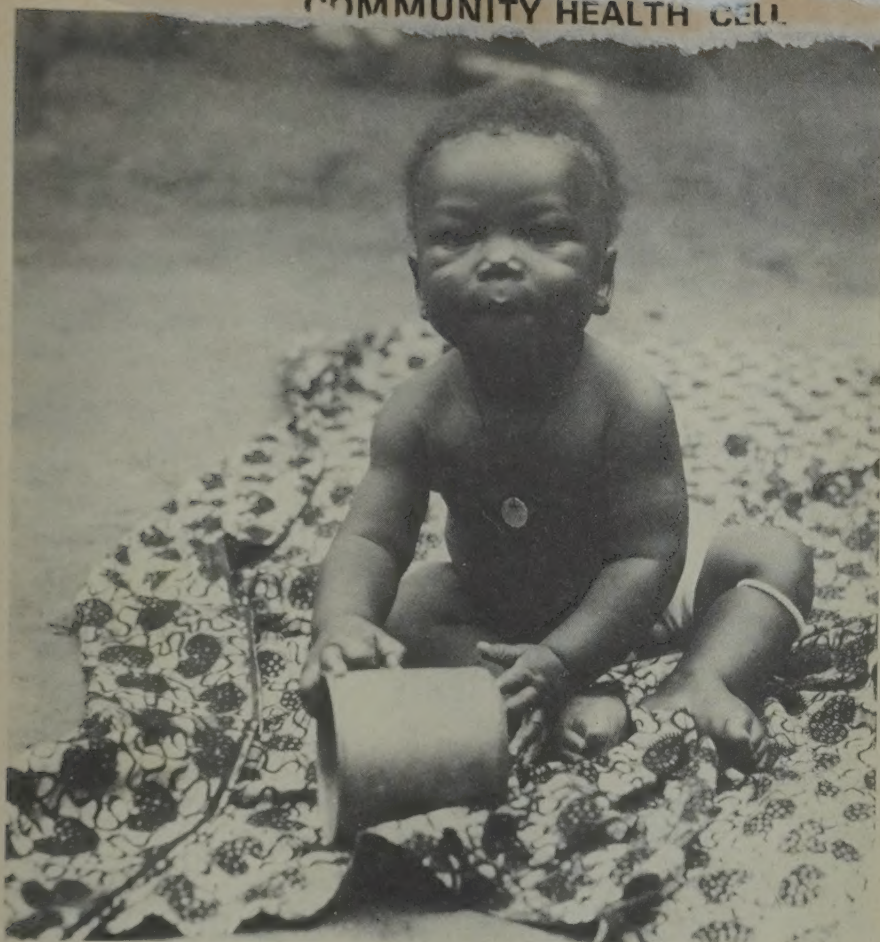
Preface

This book is for all those who are interested in the care of children. It is especially for those who teach parents and relatives. It can be used in people's homes, village health posts, schools, health centres, village nutrition clinics, community clinics and in any other place where workers teach parents about child care.

This book can be used by any worker who helps with and gives advice about child care. It can be used as a *memory aid*. It reminds the worker to teach the most important messages for child care. It can also be used as a *teaching aid*. The worker uses the illustrations when she is talking to parents and relatives and to village leaders. (See page 60 for hints for using this book.)

Note: In this book the term *health worker* is used to include all those people who are trained in health care and health teaching. This includes doctors (especially trained indigenous practitioners), nurses, midwives, environmental sanitation officers, medical field unit staff, nutrition officers and community health workers of all kinds. It also includes trained traditional birth attendants (TBAs), community clinic attendants and others. This book is for all these health workers, as well as for village-level workers and those working in urban shantytowns.

This book is dedicated to the memory of Miss Gladys Gyan who with tireless enthusiasm taught the mothers of Techiman District how to improve the health of their children.



This is a child from the village, aged 7 months. He is happy and healthy. This book shows how a mother can help her child to grow strong and healthy. For this, a child needs good care and enough food. The mother should start giving this good care even before the child is born.

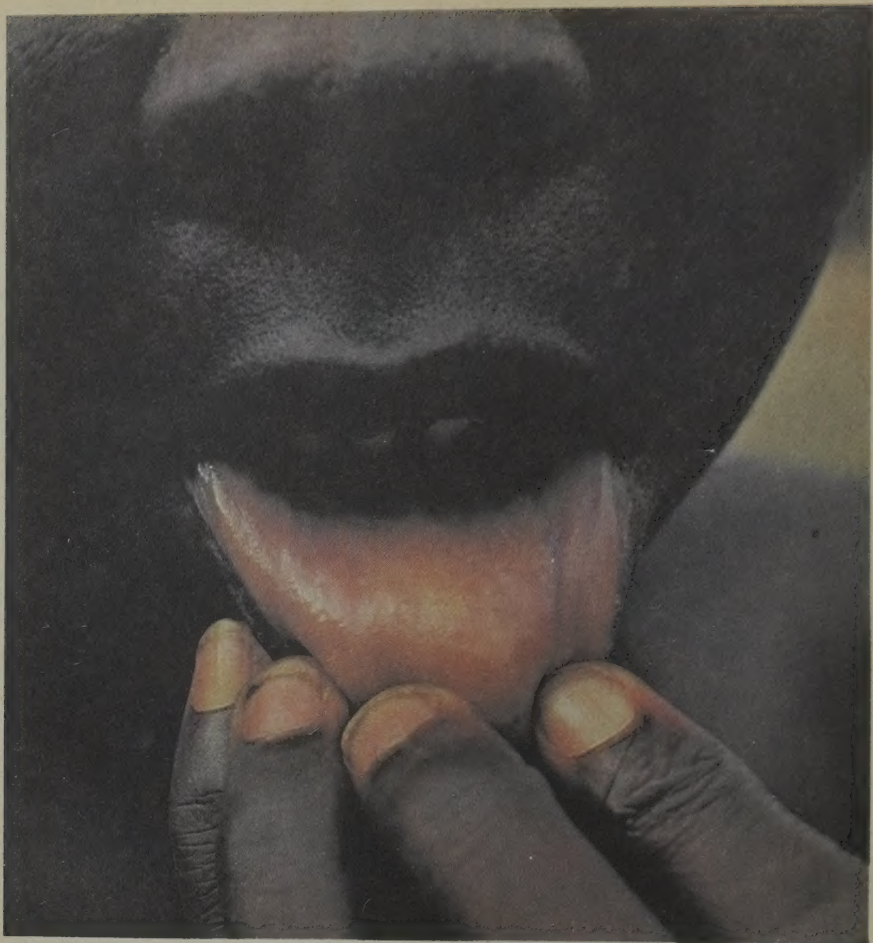


Every pregnant woman wants a healthy child. For this she has to eat more food while she is pregnant. She has to eat for two people. The pregnant woman needs food for herself and food for the baby growing inside her. When a mother eats enough food, her baby grows healthy. This mother is eating cocoyam-leaf stew with dried fish and yam. She will also eat an orange.

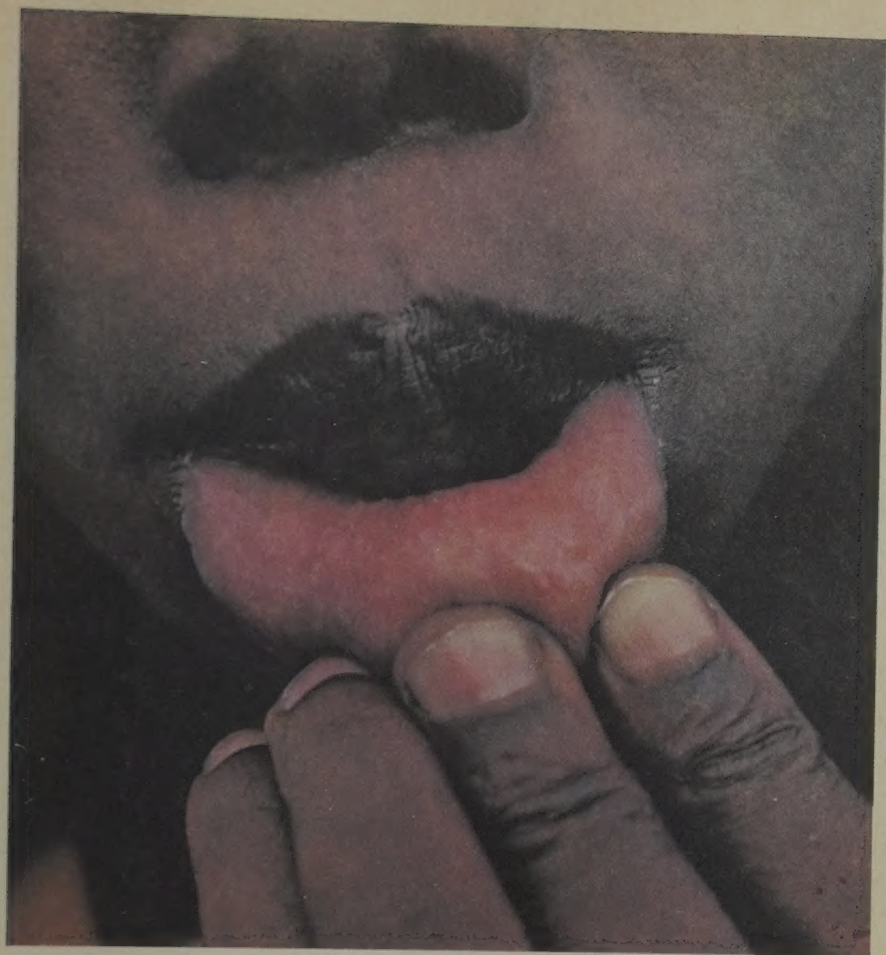
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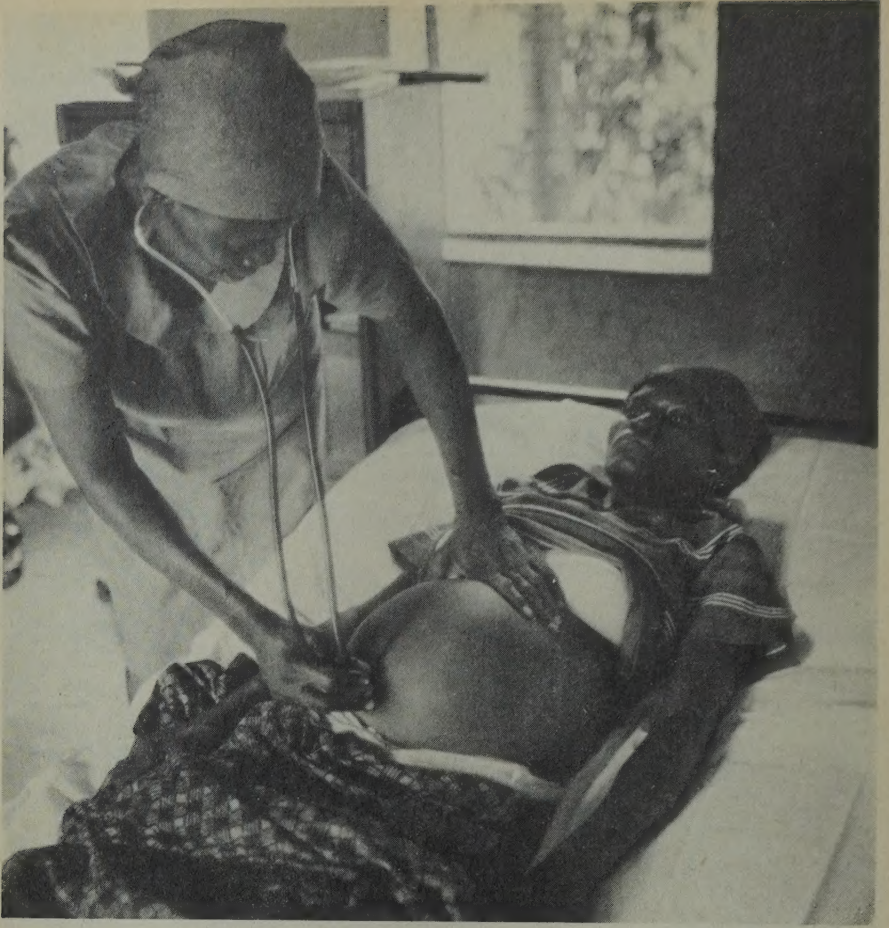
A pregnant woman does not need special foods. She should eat the same foods as usual, but she should eat more of these foods. She needs to eat extra foods such as yam, plantain or cassava, and she needs extra beans or dried fish. She also needs to eat green leafy vegetables, such as cocoyam leaves or cassava leaves, every day.



Sometimes a pregnant woman has pale lips and a pale tongue. This is because she lacks good blood. This makes her weak. It also makes her baby small and weak. The delivery may be dangerous. To help make her strong, the pregnant woman needs to get iron tablets from a health worker and take them with food every day. She also needs to eat green leafy vegetables every day. She needs to eat as much as she can of other blood-producing foods such as meat, fish and eggs.



This is a healthy woman. A healthy woman does not have pale lips or a pale tongue. She has plenty of energy and is healthy for her delivery. This is because she has plenty of good blood. Green leafy vegetables eaten every day help make a woman strong and healthy. Iron tablets taken every day are also good for the blood. When a mother has good blood, her baby grows strong. Her baby also has good blood.



A pregnant woman should have check-ups from a trained health worker. The health worker can tell how well the baby is growing inside. She will advise the pregnant woman to eat extra food and to take iron and vitamin tablets. She will also advise the pregnant woman not to do heavy work.



Sometimes new-born babies die of tetanus. The pregnant woman can protect her baby and herself from tetanus. To prevent tetanus, she should go to the health worker for injections of tetanus toxoid. She should have three injections. She should have the first injection in the sixth month of pregnancy, the second in the seventh month and the third by the eighth month.



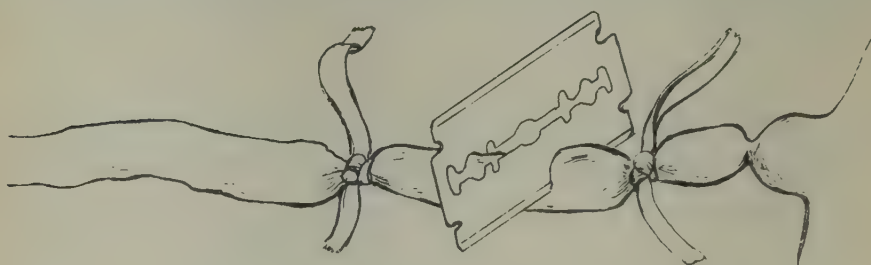
At the time of delivery, the pregnant woman needs a trained health worker such as a traditional birth attendant (TBA) or a trained midwife. The person doing the delivery should wash her hands with soap and water before she examines the woman. She should dry her hands in the air, not with a cloth. This helps to protect the woman from tetanus and from a high fever after the delivery.



The person doing the delivery should always use a new blade to cut the cord of the baby.



If she cannot find a new blade, she must use a clean and sharp used blade. She must push the blade onto the end of a fresh stick and hold it in the fire. Then she must let the blade cool in the air. After tying the cord in two places, she can use the blade to cut between the ties.



The cord should always be cut close to the body of the new-born baby. Nothing should be put on the freshly-cut cord. It will dry up and come off naturally. If an old blade is used to cut the cord, the baby should be taken to the hospital for an injection against tetanus.



From the time a mother is eight months pregnant, she should clean her nipples daily with soap and water. This will prevent the new-born child from getting a sore mouth. It will also help to prevent sores of the mother's breast. She should keep cleaning her nipples, even after giving birth, like the mother in this picture.



This mother has a new baby. The mother is healthy because it is 3 years since her first child was born. The mother has had time to regain her strength. She cared well for the other child for 3 years. Now she will also care well for the new baby. It is good for the health of both mother and baby if there is a 3-year space between babies. The health worker can teach a mother the best ways for spacing births.



A mother should breast feed her baby from the day the baby is born. Mother's milk will come more quickly if she breast feeds her baby from the first day. The milk that comes in the first few days is very good for the baby. This milk is very good food and it protects the baby from some diseases.



After the baby is born, the mother needs to eat plenty of food. She should drink plenty of soup and plenty of water; then she will produce more milk for the baby. The mother should eat the food she normally eats. She also needs to eat some green leafy vegetables, such as cocoyam leaves, every day. Every month, mother should visit the health centre to make sure that she and the baby are healthy.



This mother is breast feeding her child. Mother's milk is clean and pure. It is best if baby gets this good milk for as long as possible. A healthy mother can breast feed her child till he is 2 or 3 years old. When a baby is 4 months old, mother's milk does not give enough food so the baby needs to start eating other foods as well.



This mother is feeding corn porridge with groundnut paste to her baby. He is only 4 months old. He is growing bigger. After 4 months, mother's milk does not give the baby enough food. The baby needs extra food; then he will grow well. If a mother does not have enough milk, if there are twins, or if mother has died, the baby will need porridge with groundnut paste *before* he is 4 months old. This is very important. Mother may add powdered dried fish or eggs to the porridge.



Usually a mother should start giving soft foods to the baby when he is 4 months old. Porridge is a good first food for the baby. To make porridge, first put water on the fire to boil for 5 minutes. Mash one dessert-spoon of groundnut paste with corndough in a clean container. Add the groundnut paste and corndough mixture to the boiling water and stir it for about 10 minutes. Then add 1 or 2 dessert-spoons of ground dried fish. Use a spoon to feed the baby.



Often, when the baby first tastes such food, she spits it out of her mouth. The food tastes strange to her because she has not eaten it before. But the mother should keep giving her the food; she will soon get used to it and learn to enjoy it. The mother should give the porridge when her baby is hungry, *before* the baby is allowed to suck the breast.



This baby is now enjoying the new food. He needs a lot of food to grow strong. At first, a mother should give 2 spoons of food. Each day she should give the child a little more food. Soon, the child will eat $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of porridge a day. Bananas, pawpaw, orange juice and pineapple juice are also good foods to give a baby.



A small child has a small stomach. He cannot eat a lot of food at one time, so his mother should feed him often. In addition to breast milk, she should give him as much *food* as possible.



By the time a child is 6 months old he should eat 5 or 6 times a day; then he will grow strong and healthy.

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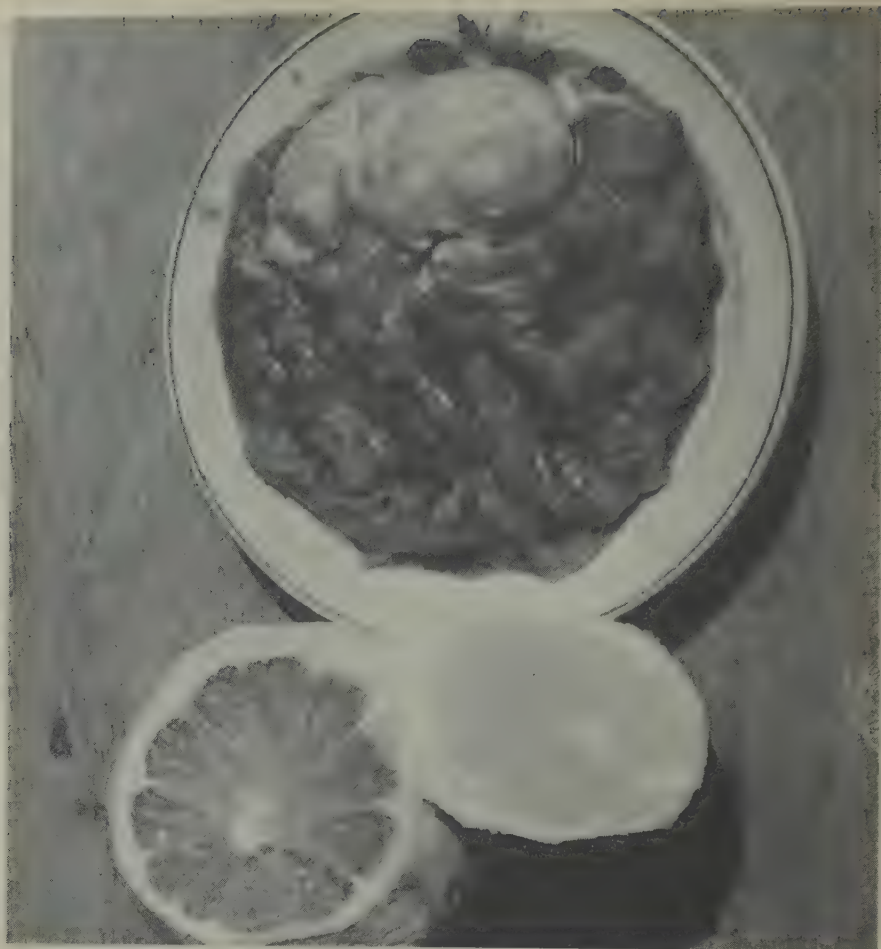


When the baby is 6 months old, the mother should give her breast milk and *one* or *two* of these foods each day:

- 1 mashed yam and green-leaf stew;
- 2 mashed red plantain with groundnut paste;
- 3 mashed cocoyam and palm oil with powdered dried fish or ground beans.



This mother cooks the food without pepper, and mashes it. She adds a little oil to the food. She buys the foods which are less costly and which her child likes to eat. Fresh fruits such as mashed pawpaw or mashed banana, or orange or pineapple juice, should be given to a baby every day.



By the time a child is 1 year old, he should eat half as much food as his mother. The child may be much smaller than his mother, but he needs lots of food to grow strong. A mother should give this food in 5 or 6 meals so that the child does not have too much food to eat at one time.



A 1-year old child needs plenty of body-building foods such as groundnuts, dried fish, beans, dried seeds, eggs and meat if available. The child needs these body-building foods because he is growing rapidly.



Children need clean food. Dust, flies and dirty hands make food dirty. Dirty food makes children sick. Food should be covered to keep out dust and flies. A mother should wash her hands before she prepares food and before she feeds her child. Mother should clean her nipples with soap and water before breast feeding her child and she should wash her child's hands before the child eats.



This mother is bathing her children. She bathes them every day. She dresses them in clean clothes every day as well. This helps them to stay happy and healthy.



A small child also needs water to drink, especially in hot weather. A small child needs water several times a day but he cannot tell his mother that he is thirsty. The mother should take the water from a clean source and keep it in a covered container. If possible, she should boil and then cool the water before giving it to the child. Boiling kills germs and so helps to prevent certain diseases.



A clean water source helps to prevent disease. Keep your stream free of weeds and flowing smoothly. People should not urinate or defecate near the stream. People should wash their clothes away from the stream, not in it. Many illnesses are caused by dirty drinking water. For good health, it is important to have clean water to drink.



Clean surroundings also help to prevent disease. This mother sweeps her house and compound every day. Keeping the house clean helps everyone to stay healthy.



Children's stools can spread many diseases. This mother sees that her child uses a pot when the child passes stools. She empties the pot into the latrine. She does not allow the child to pass stools on the ground.



Many villages have clean streams passing nearby. It is very important to protect this clean water and to keep it clean. The first water coming into the village is used for drinking and for cooking. The area near this part of the stream must be kept clean. No one should urinate or defecate near here. If someone defecates near the stream and rain washes the faeces into the water, then the water will become unhealthy to drink. A clean water source is very important to help us stay healthy.



These schoolchildren are being taught why it is important to keep the village water source clean. The schoolchildren have been taught not to go into the stream. This is to prevent diseases such as guinea worm from being brought to the village. No one is allowed to walk into the drinking water. Water is always drawn using a clean bucket or container and without stepping into the stream.



This thin child has not had enough food to eat. He needs to eat more food to grow strong and healthy.



This is the same child 4 months later. Now he is much stronger and healthier. His mother has given him more of the ordinary household foods.



How can a mother find out if her child is growing properly? The health worker can tell by weighing the child. A mother can ask the health worker to weigh her child when she visits the health centre every month. A good health worker will tell mother the weight of the child.

A healthy child should weigh this much or more:

<i>Age</i>	<i>Weight</i>	
6 months	7 kg	(15 lb)
9 months	8 kg	(18 lb)
1 year	9 kg	(20 lb)
1½ years	11 kg	(24 lb)
2 years	12 kg	(27 lb)



Often the health worker uses a weight chart like this one. She weighs the child and then records his weight. She does this every month. When the child is growing properly, the weight increases. The line on the weight chart goes upwards.



Often the health worker tells how well the child is growing by finding out how fat his arm is. She uses a measuring tape to measure the child's arm. The arm of a healthy child should measure $13\frac{1}{2}$ cm ($5\frac{1}{4}$ inches) or more from his first to his fifth birthday.



One way the health worker can see if a child is healthy is by looking at the child's eyes. He pulls down the eyelid with two fingers so that he can see the inside of the eye. When the eyelid looks pale, the child is not healthy.



A child who always looks pale needs to eat green leafy vegetables, such as cocoyam leaves, every day. A pale child also needs iron tablets every day and she should eat as much meat, fish, eggs and beans as possible. This will give her more good blood; then she will grow stronger. She will not look pale and will not feel tired and weak.



This child will not get ill with whooping cough. The health worker is giving her a 'triple' injection (DPT) which prevents whooping cough, diptheria and tetanus. This child will not catch any of these diseases. Every mother should take her child to the health worker for these injections. It is important to have all three injections. The health worker can also give injections to help prevent TB (tuberculosis) and measles.



Every child gets sick sometimes, even when his mother takes very good care of him. When a child is ill, his mother should take him to a health worker quickly. The health worker will know if the illness is serious or not. He will advise the mother how to care for the sick child.



A child who has a fever, diarrhoea or any other illness should keep having breast milk. She gets strength from the milk, and it will help her to get better more quickly. It is harmful to stop giving her breast milk.



A sick child also needs extra water. When a child has a fever, measles, malaria or any other illness, he should be given clean water to drink many times a day.



When a child has diarrhoea or is vomiting, he loses a lot of water from his body. He needs extra water many times a day. If he does not get water, he may die. Even if the child is vomiting, his mother should keep giving him a little water. His mother should give the water again and again, a little at a time.



When a child has diarrhoea, her mother can make a salt, sugar and water drink. To make this drink, first take a calabash (about the size of those used for drinking palm wine) and fill it half-way with boiled water. When the water is cool, add a 2-finger pinch of salt.



Stir the water and salt together until the salt 'melts'. Taste the salt-water to be sure that there is not too much salt. Make sure that it is not saltier than tears. Too much salt is harmful to babies. If there is too much salt, throw away the mixture and start making another one.



Add the juice of one orange to the salt-water mixture. Then add 2 dessert-spoons of honey, sugar or pineapple juice. The drink should not be made too sweet for the baby.

Another way of making this special drink: Take 1 litre of cool, boiled water (or *very* clean water). Add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt and 2 tablespoons of sugar or honey. Add the juice of one orange.



Children enjoy the taste of this drink. A child that has diarrhoea and does not drink this water, salt and orange juice mixture may become very ill and may even die. The mother should start giving this drink to her child after the first signs of diarrhoea. Give a small child 2 half-calabashes of this drink each day. An older child needs 4 half-calabashes each day if she has diarrhoea. If the diarrhoea does not stop after two days, quickly take the child to a health worker.



A child needs soft food when she has a fever, measles, malaria or other illness. This helps her to get better quickly. It is bad to stop giving food to a sick child. The child gets strength to recover by eating food.



Even when a child has loose stools, he should continue to eat soft food. This stops the child from getting very weak. This child has loose stools. His mother keeps giving him soft food to eat. She gives him soft foods such as porridge, rice water, mashed bananas and soup.



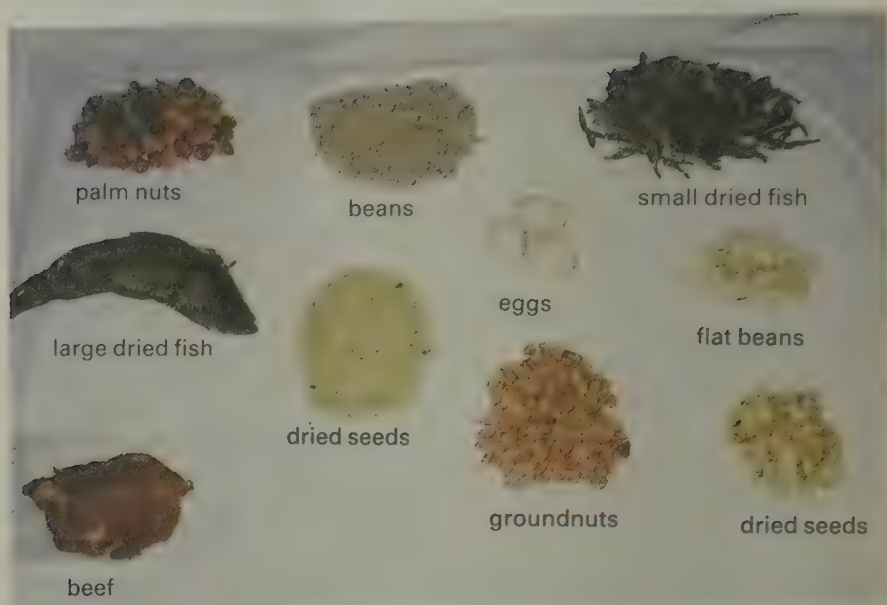
Often children eat some earth. This can make them pale and often they get worms in their stomachs. Eating earth is harmful. A mother should stop her child from eating earth. Eating earth may be a sign that the child lacks good blood. If a child eats earth she should be taken to the health worker. If needed, the health worker will give the child iron tablets or worm medicine.



People who have worms sometimes pass them in their stools. They also pass the eggs of the worms every day. These eggs are so small that they cannot be seen. They live in the earth. The eggs often get on the child's hands when he plays on the ground. When he eats food, the eggs get from his hands into his stomach where the eggs grow into worms. So, mother should wash her child's hands before he eats food. She should also cut his fingernails short so that the dirt from the ground does not stay under them.

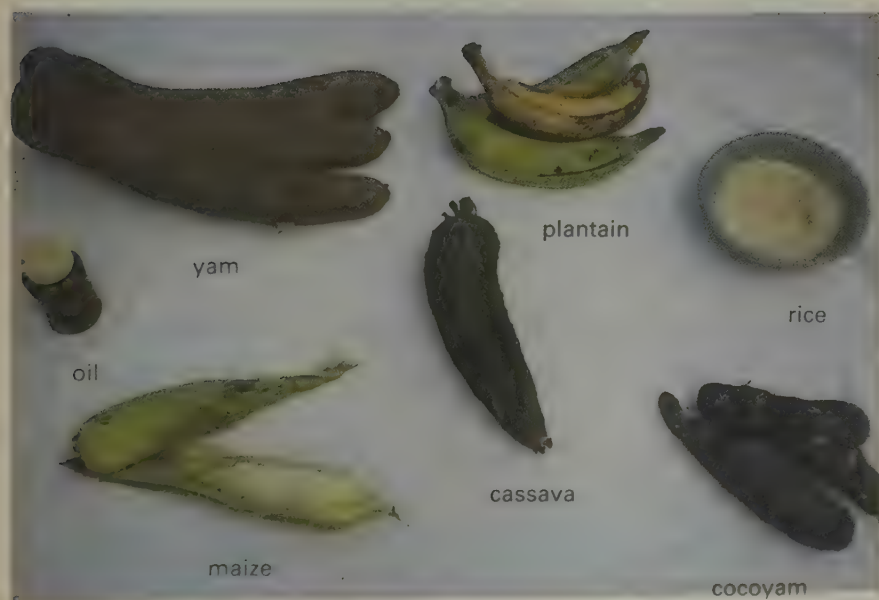


To prevent worms, mother should always wash her hands with soap and water before she prepares the food. The eggs of the worms are often on vegetables, so mother should carefully wash vegetables, such as tomatoes, peppers and onions, before the family eats them. The best way to prevent worms is for people to use a separate place for passing stools, such as a ventilated pit latrine. Children should not play near latrines.



There are 3 kinds of food: **body-building** food; **protective** food; **energy-giving** food. Everyone should eat some of each kind of food every day.

The photograph *above* shows some of the **body-building** foods. Body-building foods help our bodies grow. Groundnuts, beans, dried seeds, dried fish, meat and eggs help to build our bodies. It is especially important to give children plenty of body-building food. Children need plenty of body-building food because they are growing. Everyone should eat some body-building food every day.



The photograph at the *top* of the previous page shows some of the **protective** foods.

Cocoyam leaves, tomatoes, okra, garden eggs, onions, oranges, pear, pawpaw, bananas, mangoes, pineapple and apple are protective foods. They help to prevent illness. A mother should give her children one or more of these protective foods every day. Everyone should eat some protective foods every day to help prevent illness.

The photograph at the *bottom* of the previous page shows some of the **energy-giving** foods.

Energy-giving foods help us work the way petrol helps a car to run. Everyone should eat some energy-giving foods every day. Yams, cassava, cocoyam, plantain, rice and cooking oil are all energy-giving foods. Oil in their food every day helps children grow well. People who eat only energy-giving foods without eating body-building foods and protective foods will get sick. It is important to eat all 3 kinds of food every day.



This family is growing a variety of good foods in their garden. They are growing beans, groundnuts, tomatoes, okra, green leaves, maize, pawpaw and pineapples. Every day they will be able to eat foods from each of the 3 food groups.



These children live in the village. They have intelligent mothers who take good care of them. These mothers follow the *rules for better child care* shown on the back cover of this book. Their children are healthy. Every child can grow healthy if her mother gives her enough good food. Every day a child needs some body-building foods, such as groundnuts or fish powder. Every day a child needs some protective foods, such as green leaves or oranges. Every day a child needs some energy-giving foods, such as yams, plantain or oil. If you follow the *rules for better child care*, you will help your children look happy and healthy, like these children.



This family has three healthy children. The parents and the children eat enough food. If there are many children, it is more difficult for the father and mother to get enough food for everyone. If there are many children, it is more difficult to send all of the children to school. If there are only a few children, these things are not so difficult: the parents can give each child better care and enough food.

Hints for using this book



This book can be used by everyone working for the health of young children. You can use it when talking to small groups of mothers at the health centre, and when talking to mothers in their homes. It is also useful when talking to older people, to village leaders or to the village development committee. It is a small booklet; you can carry it easily. You can take it with you when you go to the health centre or when you are visiting village homes.



Whenever you show this book to people they become interested in the pictures. Then they begin to ask questions. This creates an interest in the subject. This is the right atmosphere for teaching. In this way, you can start good conversations with people. You may wish to talk to them at least 2 or 3 times to explain everything in this book.

You can use the messages and illustrations in the book to give you ideas for making your own teaching aids, such as flash cards and posters.



The book contains messages that are important for child care. The answers to common problems are found here. You can study it and remind yourself of all these things. This will help you to give the right answers to the problems. It helps you to recognise children with common illnesses, such as anaemia and malnutrition. You can identify these illnesses before it is too late. You can show mothers the cause of these illnesses. Then you can give simple advice.

English	Fante/Twi	Yoruba	Igbo
banana	kwadu	ògèdè òmìnì	unere
beans	akye/ adua	ẹrẹẹ (ẹwà)	agwa
beef	nantwinam	ẹran màlùù	anụ nnama
cassava	bankye	ẹgẹ. gbàgùúdà (pákí)	ji akpu
cassava leaves	bankye ahahan	ewé ẹgẹ	akwụkwọ ji akpu
cocoyam	mankani	kókò	ede
cocoyam leaves	kontomire	ewé kókò	akwụkwọ ede
corn dough	mbore	ẹkọ (àgbàdo)	agidi
corn porridge	koko	ẹkọ mímu	agwọrọ agwọ ọka
dried fish	nsesaawa/ adwene	ẹja gbígbe	azụ ọkpọọ
dried seeds	daawe/ akatoa	irúgbìn gbígbe	nkpurụ osisi ọkpọọ
eggs	kosua	ẹyin	akwa
fish	nsumu nam	ẹja	azụ
garden eggs (aubergines)	ntorewa	ikàn (ìgbá)	añara (afufá)
green leafy vegetables	kontomire/ aleefu	ẹfọ (tètẹ)	ugụ
groundnut	nkatee	ẹpà	ahụekere
maize	aburoo	àgbàdo	ọka
mango	mango	máńgòrò	mangoro
meat	nam	ẹran	anụ
oil	ngo	epo	mmanụ
orange	ekutu/ aborankaa	ọsàn	oroma
palm nut	abe	eyìn (ọpẹ)	nkpurụ akwụ
pawpaw	bɔfre	ibépe	popo
pepper	mako	ata	ose
pineapple	aborobe	ọpẹ-yinbó	nkwụaba
plantain	borodee	ògèdè àgbagbà	abịrịka
rice	emo	fáisi	rayisi
soup	nkwan	ọbẹ́yọ	ofe
tomato	tomankese	tòmátì	tomato
yam	bayere	isù	ji

English**Hausa****Kiswahili**

banana	àyàbà	ndizi
beans	wake	maharague
beef	nama	nyama ya ng'ombe
cassava	rogo	muhogo
cassava leaves	ganyaye rogo	majani ya muhogo
cocoyam	gwaza	kiazi kikuu
cocoyam leaves	ganyaye gwaza	majani ya kiazi kikuu
corndough	garin dawa	ugali
corn porridge	koko (kūnu)	uji
dried fish	bushehen kifi	samaki ilio kaushwa
dried seeds	irī	mbegu zilizo kaushwa
eggs	kʷai	mayai
fish	kifi	samaki
garden eggs (aubergines)	yalo	biringanya
green leafy vegetables	ganyaye	spinach, kabichi, sukuma wiki
groundnut	gyaɗa	njugu
maize	masàra	mahindi
mango	mangoro	embe
meat	nama	nyama
oil	mai (man dahuwa)	mafuta
orange	lemo mai zaki	chungwa
palm nut	kwakwa	mnazi
pawpaw	gwandà	papaya
pepper	barkono	pilipili
pineapple	abarba	nanasi
plantain	àyàbà	ndizi
rice	shinkafa	wali
soup	miyà	mchuzi
tomato	timatir	nyanya
yam	doya	kiazi mbatata

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Details of how to use this book are given in the preface inside the front cover.

There is a glossary of the names of foods in several languages at the end of the book.

Here is a summary of rules for better child care.

- Breast feed your child for as long as possible.
- Start to feed your young child porridge when she is four months old.
- Feed your young child five or six times a day.
- Continue to feed your child when she is ill.
- Give your child extra water when she is ill, especially if she has diarrhoea (see page 44).
- When your child is ill, seek help early from the nearest community clinic or health centre.
- Get your child immunised.
- Get your child weighed each month.
- Keep flies off food.
- Wash your own hands and your child's hands before feeding her.
- Give your child *clean* water to drink.
- Give your child foods from each of the three food groups every day.
- Have only a few children.
- Make sure there is a space of two to three years between children.